

Forestry Culture and the Japanese Bureaucracy

Seiichi Nishikawa

Abstract

Forests provide various other functions over and above the generalized function of providing raw materials to be used in production processes. Apart from this general function, forests possess many various social functions. Various traditions have also developed in step with the processes of modernization, such as, land and water conservation, recreation, as well as the emphasis that has been placed on developing the capacity of forests to function as providers of raw materials. The same can be said for the current situation of forestry culture.

However, the forest as a cultural symbol is scarcely understood in Japan.

In order to guarantee the continued existence of current functions that forests provide it is imperative that certain institutional frameworks are put into place. The "Forest Protection Scheme" is one such example of Japanese forestry policy. In fact, it can be noted that this system is highly representative of the Japanese bureaucratic system in its entirety. In Japan, the bureaucratic system sets its own goals, which it then pursues vigorously. The major problem with this system of forestry management is that in today's mass consumer society it is incredibly difficult to place effective control mechanisms on the bureaucratic system; and secondly the ability to ascertain a true picture of the state that Japanese forests are presently in.

KEY WORDS FORESTRY CULTURE - FOREST PROTECTION
SYSTEM - JAPANESE BUREAUCRATIC SYSTEM

Introduction

With the process of modernization, among various other social functions, the need to conserve land and water, and the additional need for recreation space have been most heavily in demand. In reality however, these so called demands have in actual fact been created by the bureaucratic system.

The conditions in which we find forests today is due largely to the result of human development, and in a figurative sense forests can no longer be called totally natural. Rather the condition that we find forests in today can be viewed as a symbolic reflection of our own cultural trends. Unfortunately, however, the current state of many Japanese forests cannot be viewed as reflecting a positive cultural trend. The question may be asked as to how we can reverse this trend and return Japanese forests to a state in which they do reflect a positive culture.

This paper will address the issue of forestry policy and the demands placed on forest functions, as well as the relationship of both with regard to the cultural characteristics of the Japanese bureaucratic system.

1. The Demands that are Placed on Forest Functions

In general there are five functions that forests possess:

- a) timber and lumber production
- b) conservation of land and water
- c) conservation of the activities
- d) recreational pastime
- e) cultural attachments

The production of timber and lumber is purely an economic function. The conservation of land and water, conservation of the environment, recrea-

tional pastime, and cultural activities, are all classed as social functions.

The function of producing timber and lumber was the earliest demand by human society placed on forests. Incidentally, the function of producing lumber also includes the cultivation of various mushroom varieties, mountain vegetables and herbs, and certain forest extracts.

In figure 1 Hasel identifies three stages in the use of forests in the production of lumber and other products.⁽¹⁾

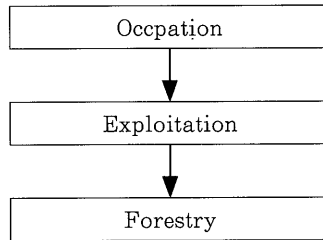


Figure 1 Stages of Use of Forests in the Production of Lumber and Other Products

In legal terminology “*occupation*” refers to a situation where there is an issue of “occupancy”. However the term used here refers to a situation where lumber is felled from an ownerless forest in order to supply the requisite needs of a community. The felling of lumber in these situations rarely impacts heavily on forest sustainability, except in cases of population increase.

Exploitation is one form of plunder, however for the purpose of this paper it refers to felling large quantities of lumber in a forest. This exploitation illustrates a rejection of forest sustainability in favor of destroying large areas in the pursuit of profit maximization. Forest devastation caused by “*exploitation*”, which is categorized as a stage found before “*forestry*” is developed, created major problems in 18th century Europe. Due to large scale felling of forests during this period, the Europeans ended up facing a major shortage of fuel.

It is not hyperbole to state that forests have become victims of industri-

alization. Ironically though, the crisis caused by the lack of lumber for fuel was in turn the catalyst behind a change to other forms of energy. The extraction of coal as an alternative energy source gradually eased the earlier pressures that had been placed on forests.

From the later half of the 18th century through to the early 19th century in Germany, the concept of exploitation or rather the process of forest exploitation developed into the theme of "forestry". Initially, "forestry" reflected a shift away from using forest products as fuel to the production of lumber; this change can be attributed to the increased capitalization of the economic functions of forests. But as time progressed, industrial society increasingly viewed forests as functionally beneficial to the public interest. The reason for this change can be summed up as a growing awareness by society that water, the atmosphere, industrial worker's mental and physical health were all acutely influenced by the state in which forests were kept. Thus both economic functions and functional benefit to public health that forests were perceived to possess became a major issue.

In Japan's case, the concept of "forestry" was developed in the first few years of the 19th century.⁽²⁾

Next I will turn to the historical development of the "Forest Protection Scheme" as a means of showing how the creation of a functional benefit to the general public with relation to Japanese forests, was manufactured by the bureaucracy rather than emanating from some form of public demand.

2. The Japanese "Forest Protection Scheme"

In Japan the "Forest Protection Scheme" co-exists alongside the "Forest Development Scheme", which are both important components of government "Forestry Policy". Furthermore, these policy measures are based on the "Forestry Act".

A forest is designated as a "Protection Forest" in accordance with the above act when the following objectives are deemed applicable. There are eleven objectives that a forest can be categorized as a "Protection Forest". In addition there are seventeen kinds of "Protection Forests" that can be created in accordance with the above eleven objectives.

Table 1 Purposes and Kinds in the Japanese "Protection Forest"

Purpose		Kind	
1	Water Conservation	1	"Protection Forest" for water conservation
2	Erosion Control	2	"Protection Forest" for erosion control
3	Landslide Prevention	3	"Protection Forest" for landslide prevention
4	Preventing Shifting Sands	4	"Protection Forest" for shifting sand control
5	The Prevention of Wind, Flood, Sea Winds, Drought, Snow, and Fog Damage	5	"Protection Forest" for wind damage prevention
		6	"Protection Forest" for flood damage prevention
		7	"Protection Forest" for sea breeze damage prevention
		8	"Protection Forest" for drought damage prevention
		9	"Protection Forest" for snow damage prevention
		10	"Protection Forest" for fog damage prevention
6	Avalanche and rock-slide protection	11	"Protection Forest" for preventing avalanches
		12	"Protection Forest" for rock fall prevention
7	Fire Prevention	13	"Protection Forest" for fire prevention
8	Breeding Fish	14	"Protection Forest" for fish breeding
9	The Preservation of Navigation Sights	15	"Protection Forest" for navigation target
10	Public Health	16	"Protection Forest" for recreation
11	The Preservation of Natural Beauty or Historic Sites	17	"Protection Forest" for scenic beauty

The history of "Protection Forests" in Japan is quite old. There are examples of restrictions being placed on tree-felling as far back as the middle-ages.⁽³⁾ From the 18th century through to the early years of the 19th century, there are numerous examples of "Protection Forests" in Japan. The purpose of "Protection Forests" in Japan today can be seen as a continuation of the pre-modern procedures.

Today's modernistic "Forest Protection Scheme" has its origins in the

creation of the "Forestry Law" in 1897 (Meiji 30). Today's "Forest Protection Scheme" still contains the essence of traditional Japanese legal approaches that were popular during Meiji Japan. Furthermore, the political structure of centralized power found in Meiji Japan can still be seen in today's Japan.⁽⁴⁾

The essence of centralized power that can still be seen in today's "Forest Protection Scheme" stems from attempts made during the Meiji period to stop forest degradation. This early attempt at preventing forest degradation was implemented in 1911 (Meiji 44), but in reality only took effect after the end of WWII.

3. The National Development of a "Forest Protection Policy"

At the end of WWII, the level of devastation visited on Japanese forests was conspicuous. The primary cause of this devastation can be found in the felling of trees en-masse during the war, and the additional stresses associated with massive social dislocation following the immediate period after Japan's surrender. The second cause of devastation can be attributed to natural disasters, namely typhoons.

Two policies were created to combat the devastation caused to Japanese forests by the above. The first policy undertaken in 1948 (Showa 23) was an attempt at strengthening the pre-existing "Forest Protection Policy". The second policy attempt was the implementation of the "Forest Water Source Improvement Policy" in 1949 (Showa 24).

Both of these actions were "Forest Protection Policy" attempts, and at the same time both were policies of "afforestation". Forests that had been devastated were newly designated as "Protection Forests" under the new policy guidelines, and vigorous forestation was undertaken in those area affected at no cost to the landowners.

The above policy was formally established with a whole scale revision of

the of "Forest Law" undertaken in 1951 (Showa26). Furthermore, the "Temporary Measures for the Development of Protected Forests Law" was created in 1954 (Showa 29). The background to the creation of this law can be found in the devastation visited on Western Japan following a typhoon in 1953 (Showa 28). The creation of this law promoted the further development of "Protection Forests".

4. Issue Based Policy Changes of the "Forest Protection Scheme"

There initially was a ten year limit placed on the "Temporary Measures for the Development of Protected Forests Law". But this legal time limit has been consistently extended. Currently the law is in its fifth period of extension. The policy issues of the "Forest Protection Scheme" have been constantly altered throughout each of the five extension periods. Table 2 highlights the main policy changes that have occurred.

Table 2 The Policy Theme on the "Temporary Measures for the Development of Protected Forests Law"

term	thema	social context
1st term (1954-1963)	Increase of water-conservation-forest, erosion-control-forest.	Devastation of forests right after the end of a war. A major natural disaster in 1953.
2nd term (1964-1973)	Increase of water-conservation-forest.	Increase in demand of water caused by high-speed economic growth.
3rd term (1974-1983)	Increase of recreation-forest.	Development of urbanization.
4th term (1984-1993)	Complementary designation of "Protection forest".	The policy goal of designating forests as "Protection forests" had reached its conclusion. However, the function of these forests was still viewed as insufficient.
5th term (1994-2003)	Continuation of complementary designation of "Protection forest".	

Preventing encroachment on forest areas and improving water conservation were goals of the first period (1954-1963; Showa 29-38). The scale of devastation caused by natural disasters in 1953 (Showa 28) was the largest seen since the Meiji period. The reasons for the scale of devastation being so large were attributed to the massive destruction of forests in the early years after WWII. Therefore the Japanese government realized they needed to act urgently in order to fix the problem.

During the second period (1964-73; Showa 39-48), water conservation was the main reason for forest protection. The main objective of policy during this period was an attempt to deal with the increase in water demand caused by — *“Koudo Keizai Seichou”* — High Speed Economic Growth. Due to the effects of policy direction during this period, the size of protected water-conservation-forest area included in the “Forest Protection” area increased by more than seventy percent.

During the third period (1974-83; Showa 49-58), forests were further designated as essential for maintaining a healthy public environment. The reason for this policy change can be attributed to the value placed on recreational space due to rapid urbanization. The area of forests that were designated as essential to maintaining a healthy public environment grew by eight hundred percent during this period.

During the fourth period (1984-93; Showa 59-Heisei 5), policy was generally supplementary in content. This period saw a quantity increase in the designation of protected forests. The fifth period (1994-2003; Heisei 6-15), also saw a continuation of the fourth period policy of increasing the amount of protected forests in quantitative terms.

The current situation of Japan’s protected forests is illustrated in table three.⁽⁶⁾ The overall area of protected forests will reflect the above mentioned policy initiatives and results.

Table 3 Designated conditions of the present Japanese "protection forest" (in 2000)

	Kind of "protection forest"	forest aera		total	ratio toward the whole forest area (%)
		national	non-national		
1	"protektion forest" for water conservation	32.91	30.96	63.87	25.40
2	"protektion forest" for erosion control	7.83	13.20	21.03	8.36
3	"protection forest" for landslide prevention	0.15	0.35	0.50	0.20
4	"protection forest" for shifting sand control	0.04	0.12	0.16	0.06
5	"protection forest" for wind damage prevention	0.23	0.33	0.56	0.22
6	"protection forest" for flood damage prevention	0.00	0.01	0.01	0.00
7	"protection forest" for sea breeze damage prevention	0.05	0.08	0.13	0.05
8	"protection forest" for drought damage prevention	0.30	0.43	0.73	0.29
9	"protection forest" for snow damage prevention	—	0.00	0.00	0.00
10	"protection forest" for fog damage prevention	0.09	0.50	0.59	0.23
11	"protektion forest" for avalanche	0.05	0.15	0.20	0.08
12	"protection forest" for rock fall prevention	0.00	0.01	0.01	0.00
13	"protection forest" for fire prevention	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
14	"protection forest" for fish breeding	0.07	0.22	0.29	0.12
15	"protection forest" for navigation target	0.01	0.00	0.01	0.00
16	"protection forest" for recreation	3.18	3.17	6.35	2.53
17	"protection forest" for scenic beauty	0.13	0.15	0.28	0.11
	total	45.04	49.68	94.72	37.67

5. The Distinctive Characteristics of the Japanese Bureaucratic System

The Meiji period was an extremely important stage in Japan's modern development. And it was during this period that the Japanese bureaucratic system was created. According to the German Social Scientist Max Weber, "domination" is the most important factor that underlies social acts, and "domination" is heavily wedded to the role that "administration" plays in society.⁽⁶⁾ Furthermore, He points out that concentration of the material

means of management — “*Konzentration der sachlichen Betriebsmittel*” — proceeds via a bureaucratization of administration.⁽⁷⁾ Although Weber criticized the slowness of Prussia’s political modernization, the enormous capabilities that its bureaucratic system possessed cannot be denied. During Japan’s modern development, the Prussian legal system was perceived to be a leading model of its day, and was thus used as the framework for Japan’s legal system. Japan’s system of forest protection is just one example of policy developing out of that system.

It has been suggested that even with the introduction of this new system, Japan’s traditional legal system was left unchanged.⁽⁸⁾ In fact it is possible to suggest that the introduction of this new legal system actually melded with the traditional legal system, and which in turn was the main reason for the rise of a strong centralized Japanese bureaucracy.

The Japanese legal system at that time possessed the following distinct characteristics:

- increasing the centralization of power within the system
- repressing ideas on responsibility and rights

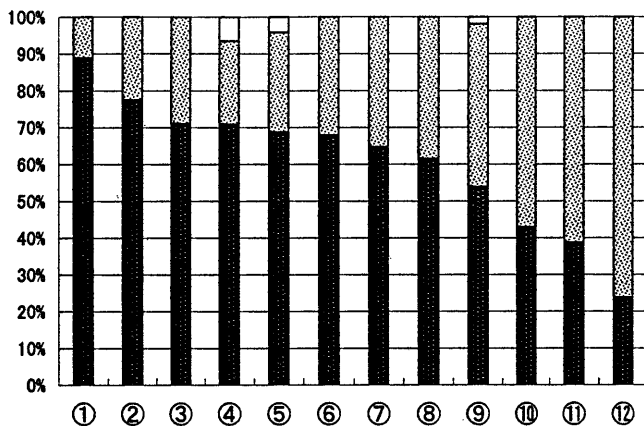
These distinct characteristics can still be seen in today’s Japanese bureaucracy. Furthermore, these same characteristics are also found in today’s forest protection policy measures.

Figure 2 illustrates the results of a survey conducted on attitudes possessed by bureaucratic elites towards local government.⁽⁹⁾ It shows that even in post-WWII Japan, elite bureaucrats still possess a strong inclination towards maintaining strong central government powers. This is even more the case when looking at the bureaucratic structure of the *Ministry of Agriculture, Forests, and Fisheries*. The Ministry has a long history of controlling local government by using the method of manipulating the amount of funds it releases to each sector. Even the policy of forest protection is manipu-

lated by the Ministry using this methodology.

Figure 2 *Opinions of Local Government held by Central Government Bureaucrats*

- The Central Government increases its control of regional policy development (%)
- ▨ Increasing Local Government Revenue Sources (%)
- Maintaining Central Government Control Mechanisms (%)



- ① Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries
- ② Ministry of Welfare
- ③ Ministry of Transport
- ④ Ministry of Construction
- ⑤ Ministry of International Trade and Industry
- ⑥ Ministry of Education
- ⑦ Ministry of Labor
- ⑧ Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications
- ⑨ Prime Minister's Office
- ⑩ Ministry of Finance
- ⑪ Others
- ⑫ Ministry of Home Affairs

6. The Condition of Japan's Forestry Culture

Malinowski states that culture can be divided into either material culture or immaterial culture.⁸⁰ However, according to current sociology, culture acts either as symbology or as catalyst in the creation of social symbols;

material culture is more commonly defined as culture based on technology. Forestry is the technological system that we as humans use in order to be able to utilize various forest functions. Thus it is possible to call forestry culture a culture based on technology.

However, if we think about the relationship between society and the forest, such as creating a "Forest Protection Scheme" based on law, we should then therefore be able to realize that perhaps forestry culture possesses some facets of social culture; and still furthermore, if we find that in fact something exists between the forest and religious thoughts, then it is also possible to assign to forestry culture a spiritual cultural aspect.

If this is true, then it is possible to make the following conclusions:

- forestry culture as technological culture
- forestry culture as social culture
- forestry culture as spiritual culture

The fact that forestry culture can be viewed as social culture is the most salient point. The reason is that contemporary Japanese forestry culture is influenced to a large extent by the bureaucracy.

The forest represents a resource for society at the same time as representing the environment. In order to create a successful environmental policy, the government has made the concept "command and control" an essential pre-requisite.¹⁰¹ "Command and control" is necessary for maintaining and promoting forestry policy in the same way. However, with regards to the Japanese government's forestry policy, it is possible to state the exact opposite. Forestry policy is being formed on the basis of neo-corporatism in our country.¹⁰² Both the bureaucratic organ and specific profit groups — corporations receiving government subsidies, forest owners' associations — work together on the following points.

- Policy—awareness of the need by the bureaucracy to achieve its own pre-designated goals
- Increasing the profits of specific interest groups

Figure 3 shows the current condition of forestry culture in Japan. It is possible to identify forestry culture as social culture, technological culture, and spiritual culture. Currently though, it is more important to look at forestry culture as a social culture. There is a need to exchange information relating to various positions and from various angles concerning what is suitable forestry policy. However, the bureaucracy is attempting to universalize certain forest functions that it deems important. The bureaucracy itself is deciding on what society needs, and the general public at large accepts these needs as if they originated from their own desires.

The level of information on forests that is made available to the general public is tightly controlled by the bureaucracy. Therefore, in a manner of speaking, bureaucracy weights certain forest functions more heavily that it has a vested interest in, and thus colors the true scope of forest functions that would be otherwise available to public opinion formulation. It can be said that it is the bureaucracy that creates the ideas and then the procedures used in implementing them for its own sake.

It is very easy to detect the neo-corporative relationship between the bureaucracy and certain interest groups. In today's mass-consumption society, it is very difficult for ordinary Japanese citizens to enter into this relationship. Maybe on the far horizon this neo-corporative relationship between the bureaucracy and specific interest groups relating to forestry culture will eventually disintegrate and be transformed into a much more plural culture; but the near future will be much the same as the past has been. The further of democratization of the system is the key to bringing about such a change.¹³

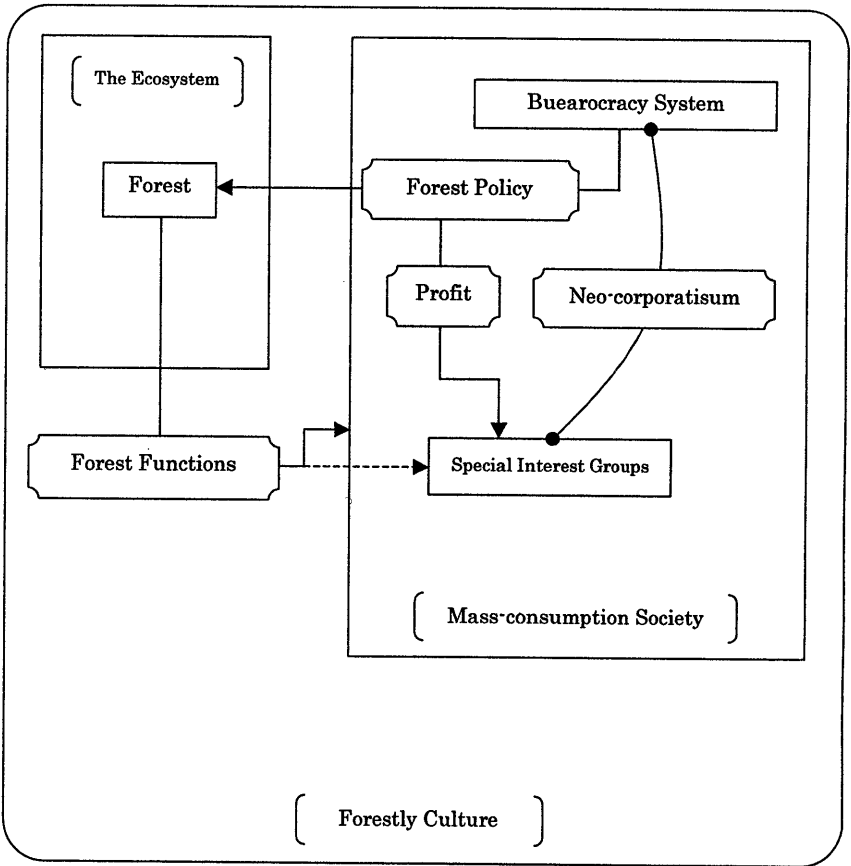


Figure 3 The State of Japanese Forestly Culture

Conclusion

- 1) Modern forestry has developed out of attempts to prevent the destruction of forests. Furthermore, modern forestry techniques have been continually employed in a systematic way in order to extract the maximum amount of forest functions. Modern forestry itself only appeared in Europe after the

- 19th century; and its appearance in Japan more or less coincided at the same time.
- 2) The "Forest Protection Scheme" is a system designed to highlight the social functions of forests. This system of forestry culture is but a part of social culture in general.
 - 3) The Japanese "Forest Protection Scheme" was implemented at the same time that Japan adopted the Prussian legal system as its modern legal structure. During this transplantation, the bureaucracy created strong central governing mechanisms, which are still identifiable in the contemporary Japanese bureaucratic system.
 - 4) When talking about forestry culture it is possible also to include the concepts of technological, social, and spiritual cultural forms. At present though, Japanese forestry culture is more associated with social cultural forms.
 - 5) When analyzing forestry culture through the lens of social cultural forms, it can be said that the relationship between the bureaucracy and certain profit groups are a form of neo-corporatism.
 - 6) Participation in this relationship is incredibly difficult for today's mass-consumer public. Maybe on the far horizon this neo-corporative relationship between the bureaucracy and specific profit groups relating to forestry culture will eventually disintegrate and be transformed into a much more plural culture, but the near future will be much the same as the past has been. The furthering of democratization of the system is the key to bringing about such a change.

Note

- (1) Hasel, K., 1971 (Translation by Nakamura, S., 1979): 18-19.
- (2) The issues that confronted pre-modern Japan such as, small land mass, high population density, intensive resource usage, and institutions, under normal reasoning would lead one to assume that Japan had already

exhausted its land resources; but due to Japan's switch from "exploitation" to "forestry" in the 18th century land resources were maintained.

Totman, C., 1989 (Translation by Kumazaki, M., 1998): 183-186.

- (3) "The felling restriction forest" had already been established in the 7th century, because of the associated large scale felling of large trees undertaken to build temples. Ariki, S., 1990: 51-56.
- (4) The traditional law culture of Japan is as follows: the law's first objective is the maintenance of order via the tools of criminal and administrative law. Its second objective is to force the actors in a dispute to reach some form of accord from within the community itself. Tanaka, S., 2000: 106.
- (5) "Year 2000 Forestry white paper" (The Forestry Agency, 2001).
- (6) Weber, M., (ed. Winkelmann, J., 1976): 541.
- (7) Weber, M., (ed. Mohr, J.C.B., 1971): 306-443.
- (8) Tanaka, S., 2000: 109-113.
- (9) This investigation result is based on the "Investigation about the career and the role behavior of the advanced bureaucracy in the term of Showa and Heisei" which was carried out in 1997 by the Japanese System of Bureaucracy Research Group. (Representative : Nakamichi, M.). Subject groups were about 1,700 government official employed in the 50th year of Showa from the 10th year of Showa (1925-1975). Nishikawa, S., 2000.
- (10) Morioka, K., Shiobara, T. & Honnma, T. (ed.), 1993: 1,291.
- (11) Jeanicke, M. & Weidner, H., 1995. Translation by Nagao, S. & Nagaoka, N., 1998): 33-39.
- (12) As the political influence waged by certain interest groups increases, policy making becomes increasingly the result of consultation between bureaucrats and interest groups. This political situation is often referred to as "corporatism". "Corporatism" emphasizes that social order is made by cooperation between groups within society. Therefore, it has been used in the past as a political analysis of certain medieval societies, and political

theories of social structures such as syndicalism and fascism. But the term can be used to describe certain societies that exist today. The term does differ from its predecessor in its analytical structure, and today's variant is commonly referred to as "neo-corporatism". Abe, H., 1991: 93.

- (13) Beck observes "individualization" in reflexive modernization and pointing out the importance of "public discussion". Beck, U., 1994: 16-31.

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(にしかわせい いち 佛教大学大学院社会学研究科博士課程)

[要 旨]

森林には林産物生産の機能があるだけでなく、さまざまな社会的機能がみとめられる。水源かん養・国土保全の機能、そしてレクリエーション機能などは、伝統的な近代化のなかで重要視されてきたし、今後もその重要性は変わらないであろう。

森林機能の持続的発揮には制度が必要であり、保安林制度はそのなかで主要な役割を果たしている。日本の保安林制度は、ドイツ・プロイセンの法体系の導入による日本の法制度の近代化のなかで確立された。その過程において、日本は中央集権的な強権の官僚制も同時に築きあげていった。戦後を経過した今日においてもなお実質的にそれは継続している。そしてそこに日本の官僚制の特徴が認められる。

林業文化は、技術文化、社会文化及び精神文化として捉えることが可能である。その中で、日本の林業文化の現状把握については社会文化の視点が重要である。社会文化として森林政策の構造をみると、官僚制と特定集団との間にコーポラティブな体制が認められる。今日の大衆消費社会にあって、この体制に対する大衆の関与は困難になっている。また、大衆の森林情報は体制の発信する一方的なものに影響を受けている。そのため、森林の精神文化は機能重視に偏向していると考えられる。保安林制度において官僚制は自身で目的を作り、これに集中している。大衆消費社会において我々はこれを制御することができないままである。

日本の林業文化における官僚制と特定集団との間にコーポラティブな体制は、いずれ壊れて多元的な関係へと進むであろう。その契機は政治の民主化において他にないであろう。